The Burning of Batoum

An Audacious Hazard of Nikolai, Independent Agent, as Related by His Lieutenant, Summers

By H. M. EGBERT

Two years ago, when the revolutionary movement in Russia was at its height and frightful excesses, perpetrated both by the government and the Nihilists, were reported daily in all the newspapers of western lands, the world was appalled to learn that a great part of Batoum, the largest city in the Caucasus, had been consumed by fire.

Batoum is the center of the Russian oil-refining business. It is the only place that rivals the Pennsylvanian and Kansan fields. Inexhaustible gushers of petroleum exist everywhere in its vicinity, and oil-ships from Batoum pass oil-vessels from New York harbor on every sea. Naturally, a Russian city of this description is a hot-bed of revolution. Persians, Russians, Tartars, Turks, Khivans—men from all eastern countries, all equally infected with Nihilist doctrines, work side by side in the refineries.

A feature of the conflagration, which though half forgotten amid the greater disaster, excited much speculation at the time, was the blowing up of the oil-ship Caspian, which lay in the harbor.

This is how the series of events began. A general strike had been proclaimed by the Nihilists, in answer to the edict establishing martial law in the city. The refinery owners, whose interests made them close allies of the government, had grown equally embittered and exasperated. The refineries were all situated upon the water-front, and a large number of strike-breakers had been employed by the owners and lodged and fed within these buildings, so that the strikers could not approach them. There they worked, night and day.

Out in the basin lay the Caspian, waiting to take on board a cargo of refined oil for Glasgow. The revolutionists had sworn that she should not sail. Nikolai and I had hurried to Batoum at the first outbreak of trouble; he was at the head of the inner section of the party, and if the strike succeeded in bringing the government to terms, it would immensely increase their prestige throughout the Russian empire; it would even react upon St. Petersburg, where the czar had just convoked the duma and was wavering between constitutionalism and absolutism.

All hinged upon one thing. If the Caspian sailed with her cargo of oil, it would demonstrate that the revolutionists' cause was hopeless. She must not sail. But how was the threat to be translated into action? The police boats patrolled the stretch of water that lay between the vessel and the land. Moreover, it was not necessary to bring the Caspian to the dock, for a pipe line had been laid down between her and the refinery, and through this the crude oil, when ready, would be pumped into the hold. In two days, or at most, in three, the strike-breakers would have restored order and resumed the suspended operations within the great building.

The revolutionists opened negotiations with the governor general. If he would suspend martial law and summary executions, business should be resumed. They sent Nikolai to him with such proposals. We went up to the palace upon the hill and were admitted to General Kaulbars, a man of sinister fame who, having failed in the Manchurian campaign, had been sent back to shoot down men of his own nation that aspired to freedom.

Kaulbars was seated at the table of his office in uniform. He heard Nikolai in scornful silence, fiddling with his black beard and twining his long fingers round each other nervously.

"You tell me that unless I suspend martial law you will blow up the Caspian," he said suavely. He seemed to think for a moment, then pressed a bell upon his table twice. Instantly a pair of armed guards appeared at the door, their rifles turned full upon Nikolai and myself.

"Take these men out and hang them in the courtyard," he said.

Hitherto Nikolai had spoken in the vulgar Russian of the laboring man. Now, without a sign of trepidation, he addressed Kaulbars in his own dialect.

"I wouldn't do that," he said persuasively.

"Why not?" demanded Kaulbars, starting from his seat in astonishment.

"Because his majesty would be annoyed with you," said Nikolai; and, unpinning his lapel, he exposed to the general's view the insignia of the Black Hundred, that murderous organization very close to the emperor's heart.

Kaulbars signed to the soldiers to depart. "Who are you?" he stammered. "Why did you come to me with threats?"

"General," said Nikolai, "you failed to hear me patiently. I did not threaten to blow up the Caspian. I was repeating to you the absurd threats of the Nihilists. I came to assure you that I can lay my hands upon the inner council; I know where they meet and what they plan."

Kaulbars started to his feet excitedly. "I will lead a battalion there," he cried. "At once!"

"It is not so easy as that," Nikolai responded. "The house is fortified; they have three pieces of artillery, which they brought in, in oil drums. And there are two hundred men with Mausers and Browning pistols. Why, general, the town is full of American correspondents, and since his majesty was mistakenly persuaded into relaxing the censorship of the press, they would telegraph to their papers that civil war has broken out. How would that affect your interests?"

The general sank back into his chair. "But I must have them," he muttered, wiping the sweat from his brow. "What shall I do?"

"Give me six men tomorrow evening," said Nikolai. "Let them meet me at the corner of Presbykoff street, with picks and shovels. That is all I require to exterminate revolution in Batoum."

And he went on to expound his scheme. As Kaulbars listened I saw the sweat start out upon his face again; I could not understand the words Nikolai uttered, but I could see that Kaulbars was badly terrified. At last he stood up.

"I agree," he said. "But, one of the six goes armed. And, at the first sign of treachery, he will shoot you. You see," he went on apologetically, "these cursed Nihilists have taken to forging badges of the Black Hundred now, and it is my duty to be on guard against every man. Curse this appointment! I wish I were back in St. Petersburg. Yes, one of the six goes armed. And I shall be that, Captain—?"

"Skobeloff," said Nikolai with a bow; and then we left him.

When we were back in our quarters Nikolai explained his scheme to me.

"I told the governor general," he said, "that the Nihilists, working as employes of the city council, have succeeded in laying a dynamite mine under the palace, controlled by an electric wire which runs from their headquarters in the suburbs, a mile away. Of course he wanted to dig it up. I represented that such an attempt would have disastrous results, and propounded an alternative scheme. The other end of the wire, I explained, runs into their arsenal. By disconnecting the wire mid-way, and establishing a miniature battery underground the current can be reversed and sent into the revolutionists' headquarters, where an accomplice will have affixed a side-wire running into the revolutionists' cordite store. One touch of a button, and the fort goes into the air. Picture the general's joy! I found by a few judicious questions, that he knows nothing at all of electricity. He is too terrified to remain in the palace, so he himself will take charge of the party of excavators; and at the first sign of treachery, he will shoot. I told him that it might be necessary to destroy a few harmless people in blowing up the fort. 'Burn the whole cursed town, if you want to,' he answered. So there you are, Summers."

Then from a desk he drew a large sheet of blue paper, which he spread out on the table in front of him.

"Do you know what this is?" he asked.

I saw a multitude of white and red lines traced upon it, but their meaning was incomprehensible to me.

"This," said Nikolai, "is a map of the underground city of Batoum. It is the only complete map in existence, although, of course, it exists in sections. The sewers are known to the sewage department, for instance, and the gas mains to the gas companies. It was prepared for the inner section by one of the city engineers. It is very useful to know what one is living over.

"Here," he continued, tracing his finger along a series of thick, white lines, "are the sewers, which come to the surface in the suburbs as open ditches. Here are the gas mains—not many of them as yet." He pointed to a broad ribbon of red which shot into the map from without and divided into several branches, all terminating in parallel lines along the waterfront. What do you suppose these to be?" he asked.

I shook my head.

"That is the underground pipe line. It runs from the oil gushers toward the mountains through the city, taps some local gushers, and connects with the terminal refineries. The crude oil is there converted into the commercial product, and loaded upon the ships—or, in our case, pumped through a submarine pipe into the hold of the Caspian. Now do you begin to glimpse my plan?"

"I understand that you are to blow up some buildings with dynamite, which the governor general will think are strongholds of the Nihilists," I answered. "But what that has to do with the pipe line, or how you will blow up the Caspian, is still a puzzle to me."

"You are very slow at deduction," said Nikolai impatiently. "Now let me explain fully. We are not going to set off any dynamite. There exists no dynamite, outside the brain of Kaulbars. What we shall do is this: Tomorrow night we meet him and his excavators at the appointed spot and lead them out to here." He put his finger down upon a part of the map. "Here the oil pipeline and the main gas-pipe cross one another—although the fact is probably unknown to both the oil and the gas companies. Here the oil pipe-line swings around for the refineries, and, ten feet immediately below, is the gas main.

Here we pretend to dig for the electric wire which supposedly connects with the dynamite store. Kaulbars will not get down into the mud, and his soldiers will obey my orders without understanding or questioning. We take with us some lengths of rubber hose. We cut a hole in either pipe and switch off the flow. The oil, diverted from its natural channel, streams through the gas main. The gas, choked off by the oil, flows into the oil pipe, which is temporarily emptied. The result?"

"The oil pours through all the branches of the gas main, into every home, comes into contact with the light, and sets fire to the city," I cried.

"Precisely. But since only the officers and police have gas in their homes, the poor will not suffer. And the gas, rushing through the oil pipe into the refineries, comes into contact with the lights and explodes with terrific violence; moreover, it passes straight through the pipe-line beneath the water into the hold of the Caspian and the work of the revolutionary party is accomplished."

He looked at me triumphantly, and I saw, not the horror of the scheme, with its attendant holocaust of lives, but only the master-plan of a master-mind. I grasped his hand fervently.

"It is the plan of a genius," I exclaimed.

Kaulbars and his men were already upon the spot when we arrived at the corner of Presbykoff street upon the following evening. The general was dressed as a captain of sappers. Behind him his six men stood at attention.

"It is something of a tramp," said Nikolai, as he greeted him. "If you will follow us—"

"I shall accompany you," said Kaulbars grimly. "And if you play us false, Captain Skobeloff—" He hesitated and looked back. Two men sprang forward and grasped me; two more grasped my companion.

"Search them," said the governor general.

We were neither of us armed. When this became patent to Kaulbars, he apologized with some uneasiness.

"The truth is, Captain Skobeloff," he said to Nikolai, "I am really at my wits' end, surrounded as I am by spies and traitors. I confess that I have had suspicions of you. There are four Captain Skobeloffs in the army list; but three are stationed in Moscow and one is upon special duty in Vienna."

"I am he," Nikolai answered, and began to speak of men at the emperor's court. Kaulbars had been an attache there. The last vestige of suspicion disappeared.

"And now let us set out," said Nikolai; and he led us through the deserted streets, with their patrols at every corner, who challenged us and received the pass-word from the governor general. At last we emerged into a wilderness of building lots, a desolate district among the oil fields, where the rank autumn growth struggled against the black ash from the refineries that lay thickly over all. Nikolai stopped at a small post which indicated the turn of the subterranean oil-pipe.

"Here is the most suitable place," he said in a low voice. "You have the battery, Summers?"

I drew the two dry cells which I had brought from my overcoat pocket. Kaulbars looked at them suspiciously.

"For generating the current," Nikolai explained. "Two cells are sufficient to detonate the arsenal. My confederate has run the wire into the center of a heap of loose cordite. No, these are not bombs, General. See!"

He let them fall into the grass, then picked them up and stood them against the post. "Now to work," he said, and snatched a pick from the nearest soldier. I took another, and we began to break up the ground, while Kaulbars, buttoning his military overcoat tightly around him, seated himself upon the grass and watched the operations with some interest. At our command the soldiers fell to work, and soon a large hole had been excavated. Then we set to with the spades, leaped into the excavation, and shoveled until we could hardly throw up the earth to the edge of the pit. At last the picks chinked.

"That's the gas main," whispered Nikolai. "We must have missed the pipe. Widen the hole!" he directed the soldiers, and the excavation began to spread out in all directions, until all at once an immense earthen pipe, of wide dimensions, appeared above our heads amidst the crumbling soil.

"What are you doing?" cried Kaulbars in alarm.

"Burned out a carbon fuse," called Nikolai. "Now for the oil-pipe line, Summers."

We clung to the sides of the pit and renewed our toil. This pipe was stronger, however, and it required a violent effort to break it. A large, irregular hole suddenly appeared, and a sudden rush of oil drenched us to the skin.

The fluid was spurting under the force of the pumps. For a moment we could make no headway. It bathed us, running down our clothes, twisting us round; we clung to the hose, which writhed and spun in our hands like an enormous snake. At last, with a final effort, we thrust it into the orifice. A little jet of oil spurted beside it, but meager in comparison with what we had dammed back.

"How long," cried Kaulbars in an agitated voice. He was becoming nervous. I saw the revolver tremble in his hand as it was turned, now upon Nikolai, now upon myself. Nikolai scrambled out of the pit, I followed, and we stood, dripping with oil, two hardly human figures, in front of the governor general.

"It is finished!" said Nikolai slowly.

A cry came from one of the soldiers. I spun round and followed the line of his outstretched finger. Batoum had suddenly grown dark. The palace, twinkling with its thousand lights upon the hill, the brilliantly illumined quarters of the officers, the light upon the sea, the lights of the harbor front, the red glare from the refineries—all had vanished, leaving us alone among a world of shadows.

Kaulbars uttered a terrible cry and leveled his pistol at Nikolai's head. I

I SAW THE REVOLVER TREMBLE IN HIS HAND.

Nikolai unfastened his coat and, from his waist, took a length of rubber hose, tough but flexible; it was a marvel to me how he had worn it. Kaulbars sprang to his feet.

"What is that?" he cried, bending into the darkness.

"The electric conductor," Nikolai answered briskly. "Now, general, will you throw down the dry cells to me?"

Rather distastefully, Kaulbars picked up the cells and dropped them upon Nikolai's shoulders. They tumbled down into the pit.

"In ten minutes, general," said he, "you will see the conspirators' stronghold leap into the air. It may be that some near-by building will fall—"

"Let the whole town burn," responded Kaulbars savagely, stamping his feet to warm them against the frosty air.

The soldiers, leaning upon their implements, looked to Nikolai for instructions.

"This is ticklish work," he called to Kaulbars. "Let your men step out of the pit."

The general called them and they clambered up the yielding sides, leaving Nikolai and myself alone.

He drew the rubber hose close, tied one end, and held the other against the pipe. Very carefully I chinked my pick against it. A chip flew, another; I struck more strongly and the pipe split. Instantly a stench of escaping gas filled the air. With all his force Nikolai thrust the end of the hose into the orifice.

struck up his arm; there was a report, and the bullet went high above our heads. The governor general stood irresolute and trembling; his soldiers, their leader having issued no command, wavered also.

"Look!" shouted Nikolai.

A stream of light sprang into the sky; another, and another. From every refinery chimney came a leaping tongue of ruddy flame; the palace glowed again; the quarters of the officers hung out broad banners of fire. It rose into the air, this universal light, in twisting spirals that locked and interlaced, like streamers of the Northern Lights. And all along the harbor front the fires sprang into life, passing from dock to dock. Only upon the waters the shadows brooded. Then, as we watched, we heard a muffled, distant roar, and a volcano of flame seemed to spring from the bed of the sea; columns of fire shot upward, and a dense pall of smoke, following them, hid everything from view, in a blackness deeper than that of night, though rent here and there by the red streamers that quivered at its heart.

The Caspian had been strewn, smaller than shingles, on the breast of the waters. And with it, two parts of the city of Batoum had disappeared.

Nikolai touched me on the sleeve. Kaulbars had dropped his weapon and stood nodding and smiling at the flames. Fear seemed to have unhinged his mind, and he regarded the destruction of his palace as the end of his term of exile in the Caucasus. Whether he suspected Nikolai of this work or believed that he had merely failed to frustrate the revolutionists' design we never knew. We backed slowly away; then, seeing that Kaulbars still made no signal, we strode off through the bewildered soldiers. They called and moved after us; we walked away faster; while they waited, a wave of darkness rushed toward us across the fields, composed of stinging particles of ashes and soot. It enveloped us; hand in hand we groped our way through the distracted city to safety.

CHINESE OF THE OCCIDENT

Men of Business Are the Ideal of Both United States and New Republic.

The soldier is, relatively speaking, unimportant in American life. As compared to other countries and other times, even our statesmen, with the possible exception of our presidents, are not held first in our estimation. In spite of all convictions under the Sherman law and the many disclosures of business lobbies, a "successful business man" comes near to being our national ideal.

We are beginning even to utilize business in fiction in a way that previous generations have not done. Always there have been "business men" in literature. Shakespeare wrote of Antonio and Shylock, but it was not the technique of their business that he chose to portray. To glorify merchandising and to put in a novel the science of salesmanship is a thing that is probably peculiar to this age. Neither soldier, sailor, poet nor politician is looked upon with such regard as the American business man.

And this should have its good effect. The more esteemed a calling the better its standards. A nation that looks up to its industrial leader puts a premium upon making business a high calling. Already at least two colleges, Harvard and Dartmouth, have business schools, not so much to teach the student business practice as to give him a broad business vision and a high business standard, such an attitude toward his calling as is common among the professions that require special training.

In a way we are becoming the Chinese of the occidental world, says the World's Work. We are doing now what they have done for centuries, glorifying the merchant and neglecting the soldier who with us for centuries past in fact and in fiction has been the dominant man of our national ideals.

"STUPID VICE OF SWEARING"

Magazine Explains Why It Has Practically Been Barred From Its Pages.

For two months I was printer's devil for the proprietor of the Valparaiso Vidette. I learned to set type and makeup the paper, but what I most remember was learning to swear. Profanity was then the accepted etiquette about a country newspaper office. The oaths meant nothing. They were not even ingenious or amusing, and they were not indicative of strong feeling. It was simply an ugly habit, like tobacco chewing—which I got to hate there because the loafers in the office used to spit on the floor about the type cases, from which I often had to pick up type. I soon became expert in profanity myself, and could scarcely utter a sentence without an oath. When I got over the habit of swearing, I got over it entirely. Ever since it has seemed to me a vice as stupid as it is ugly.

I have always been against using profane expressions in McClure's Magazine, except where the author could convince me that they were absolutely necessary for the truthful portrayal of character—and then the author had to be some one who knew what he was talking about. — McClure's Magazine.

Scant Praise to the "Good Losers."

Maj. M. M. Beck thinks too much credit is given to a "good loser." "A man," he says, "fighting for a principle should never be a 'good loser.' The men who for years unsuccessfully fought slavery in this country, in congress and on the rostrum, were not 'good losers.' They suffered defeat after defeat and yet always came back. The same may be said of the men and women who have been fighting the liquor traffic. Defeat has only made them more zealous and determined. General Grant was not a 'good loser.' At Pittsburgh Landing and in the battles against Lee on the way to Richmond reverses and seeming defeat only nerved him for more determined efforts. General Thomas would never have won or deserved the cognomen of the Rock of Chickamauga if he had been a 'good loser.' Colonel Roosevelt has none of the earmarks of a 'good loser' in the fight he has espoused for equal opportunities and better conditions for the common people of this land of the free." —Kansas City Star.

Too Wise to Start a Hunger Strike.

"A white man was talking, down to de postoffice dis mawnin', 'bout dat 'ar Mis' Pankyhurst, de English sufferer," said old Brother Bulginback. "Nigh as I could make out, sah, de lady swo' she wouldn't eat nuth'n' twell dey done emigrated her, or suppin like dat. Uh—well, sah, wid all doo respect to a white lady, if my old mule was to take dat notion—he' ain't never 'zibited no symptoms like it yit, but I says, if he should—I'd dess remark, 'Ah-ho, Brudder Mule, much obleeged; uh-kaze de less yo' eats de mo' dar am for de cow!'"

HOME TOWN HELPS

TAKE INTEREST IN GARDENS

American Estate Owners Are Awakening to the Advantage of Beautifying Grounds.

I am aware that the estate owners abroad are more attracted to their gardens than we find the American owners to be, but I am also awake to the fact that Americans are manifesting a keener interest in gardening in this present age than they ever did before. Long before many of our American estates attain the age of most of the English estates they will compare most favorably in their natural beauty, which is being developed, but which only time can finish.

American landscapes should not be compared with English landscapes. An American landscaper who knows his business can get more beautiful effects in the fall from the coloring of the leaves than Europe ever dreamed of. This is due to different, climatic conditions. On the other hand, Europe surpasses us in its winter landscape effects on account of the holly, hews and many varieties of laurel that are ever green in Europe, and which we, owing to our climate, cannot grow successfully, becuase they are not hardy with us. But the possibilities for beautiful effects are just as great here as in Europe or in any other part of the world. It sumply remains for the skill of the gardener to develop them.

Up to now, much of our trouble has been due to lavishly trying to follow European models and ideas. America presents opportunities for horticulture which are unequaled in any other portion of the globe. California and Florida can produce wonderful tropical effects; the east, while it may miss some of the hardy evergreens, still can grow enough varieties to make evergreens a feature, and, as stated above, our beautiful fall effects are unequaled in any part of the world.—M. C. Ebel, secretary National Association of Gardeners, in Letter to New York Times.

CITY PLANNERS WILL MEET

Those Interested in Advance Movement to Gather at London, England, Probably in July.

The International Garden Cities and Town Planning association was formally launched at a large meeting of representatives from different countries recently held in London to consider various proposals put forward with the idea of promoting unity of action between workers for the same object in different countries.

Cecil Harmsworth, M. P., presided, and there were also present Ebenezer Howard (the founder of the movement), Doctor Dobrzynski (Warsaw), Prof. Augustin Rey (Paris), City Architect Tonnessen (Bergen), Doctor Monckeberg (Hamburg), Richard B. Watrous (secretary, American Civic association), Masao Ito (Osaka, Japan), Baron con Strantz (Berlin), Doctor Ludwig (Stuttgart), Adolf Otto (secretary, German Garden City association), Alderman Thompson (chairman, National Housing and Town Planning Council), Prof. S. D. Adshead, H. V. Lanchester, M. Montagu Harris, Dr. R. O. Moon, W. R. Davidge and Ewart G. Culpin.

Meetings of the committee have since been held, and a framework of a constitution has been submitted to the constituent bodies. The first congress was decided upon for 1914, to take place, if possible, at Letchwork, during the month of July. All propagandist bodies will be invited to join, and societies and companies, having for their object the proper layout of land and the building of houses with a limited dividend, will be invited to become members.

Signs on Electric Light Posts.

When electric lights posts are placed on the corners, a good form of street sign consists of a frame of four sides, carrying the names of the streets, two sides of the frame being parallel and the other two converging inwardly, the shorter parallel side, about twelve inches long, bearing the name of the main street and facing that street, while the long one, bearing the same sign, is turned toward the sidewalk and is clearly visible to one approaching along the side street. The name of the side street is placed on the two converging sides, and therefore is more clearly visible from street cars than if placed at right angles. The placing of such signs on lighting posts enables them to be seen readily at night.

Planning Landscape Gardens.

Mrs. John B. Henderson of Washington city has a plan for landscape gardens that if carried out will be the finest of their kind in this country and will rival the Kew gardens of London. She has chosen a site on the Avenue of Presidents which is now covered with thick woods. She has been in London for several months studying the Kew gardens with the hope of undertaking their reproduction and expecting if posible to surpass them. It was Mrs. Henderson who had the name of Sixteenth street changed to the Avenue of Presidents.

Land of Indolence.

There is no doubt that the climate of Mexico inclines to both physical and moral indolence, and exercise of either body or mind such as people indulge in in the United States or Europe seems impossible there. The old fashioned Mexican of culture was quite content if his daughters went to church constantly, embroidered, sang a little and painted a little.

Daily Thought.

A noble aspiration is a deed though unachieved.—John Kendrick Bangs.

MAKES OLD MAIDS MARRY

Kings of Siam apparently do not believe in the wisdom of allowing single women to drift unattended about the country. In certain districts after a girl has reached an age where her securing for herself a husband is considered doubtful, she becomes a "daughter of the king." That is, the king takes upon himself the task of settling her suitably in life.

His process is quite simple and to the point. He proceeds to the Siamese penitentiary and looks over the various prisoners. There is a law in Siam that any prisoner can obtain his release by marrying one of this class of girls, and naturally enough, any prisoner whom the king picks out is not likely to be backward about consenting to the ceremony. Nor does it make any difference if he is married, for the men of that country are not restricted to one wife.

As far as can be learned, there is no allowance made for the inclination of the girl in question. She has failed in her mission in life as far as she herself is concerned, and she must abide by the decision of the king.

HUMANE ENTERPRISE

A moving picture theater in Newburg is humanely enterprising. When a small child is injured while playing alone in the street the news is flashed on the screen, so that the child's mother may, if she desires, go out and investigate.—New York Press.

WHISKERS AND RELIGION

Whiskers and religion have ever been associate. Imagine a priest of any of the Greek churches without his flowing beard. Fancy, if you can, a picture of a British Druid unbearded. Look back only to the beginnings of the primitive Methodists, with their shaved top lip, but full beard and whiskers. Look at our own day and the Jezreelite with his "Flying Roll" of back hair and finger-combed chin growth. And look at the Plymouth brethren—they have an unwritten law which means an unrazored face. But you never get Beelzebub and beards—never see a Mephistopheles with more than a cocky mustache and perhaps a chin-fork—never an edition of Milton with illustrations of a flowing-bearded Satan.—London Chronicle.

LARGEST ELECTRIC GARAGE

With room for more than 200 cars, Denver claims to have the largest exclusive electric garage in the world.

GREASE AND WARMTH

Keeping out the cold—a troublesome job just now—is a business which engages the attention of all save the natives of the tropics, and some savage or semi-sivilized races have hit upon curious methods. The commonest practice, apart from wearing furs, is that of greasing the body. All the arctic tribes do this, and in Tibet they go further and smother themselves from head to foot with a thick black oily pigment.